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FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7664
INFO RHEHNSC/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 8777
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY 8430
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 2945

UNCLAS SAO PAULO 000902

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STATE INR/R/MR; IIP/R/MR; WHA/PD

DEPT PASS USTR

USDOC 4322/MAC/OLAC/JAFEE
E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [OPRC](#) [OIIP](#) [ETRD](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT SARKOZY'S VISIT TO
WASHINGTON; WESTERN HEMISPHERE: VENEZUELA; SAO PAULO

1. "Bush's New Best Friend"

Center-right national circulation daily O Estado de S. Paulo's Paris correspondent Giles Lapouge commented (11/7): "It was a U.S. friend who arrived yesterday in Washington for a two-day visit. The Americans, who are not used to kind words from French presidents, are radiant by feeling themselves loved.... For Bush, the French flattery is opportune to a president who is limping with an approval rate of only 25%, who is hated in other nations and who has just lost his best ally, Tony Blair.... The replacement of the English friend for a French one is precious because Washington is facing several confusions: Iran, Iraq, Kurds, Pakistan, environment, Putin.... Sarkozy's Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner is a pro-American militant - sometimes more bellicose than the Americans.... However, Sarkozy is intelligent enough not to be blindly associated with the US. He insisted on that although the visit marks 'the rapprochement' with the Americans, he will not be a White House pet. Sarkozy is not Blair."

2. "Remember 2002"

Liberal, national circulation daily Folha de S. Paulo's columnist Elio Gaspari wrote (11/7): "The rupture between General Raul Isaias Baduel and President Hugo Chavez indicates that there is once again a smell of coup d'tat in Venezuela. In Baduel's words, the threat comes from Chavez himself, with his referendum proposal. It is the old coup model that became famous in 1929, in Benito Mussolini's Italy.... The other threat is the old Latin American coup d'tat model of the second half of the past century.... The Venezuelan crisis is contaminated by two irreducible blocs following the style of Latin American confusions that result in coups. Some may hate Chavez, but it is not fair to believe that half a dozen of plutocrats have the power to close the Congress and the Supreme Court as they did in 2002."
White